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**JUL 10 2006**

**OFFICE OF PETITIONS**

In re Application of	:	
Fujikawa, et al.	:	DECISION
Application No. 10/759,868	:	
Filing Date: 15 January, 2004	:	
Attorney Docket No.: MM4658	:	

This is a decision on the petition filed on 26 August, 2005, and 13 March, 2006, requesting withdrawal of the holding of abandonment under 37 C.F.R. §1.181.

The petitions were received by the attorneys in the Office of Petitions only at this writing.

**NOTE:**

**Monitoring of the status of applications on Private PAIR can inform one's management of application responses and provide an indication when mailings of Office actions should be expected.**

As discussed herein, Petitioner avers non-receipt of an Office action, however, as is appears from the record, Petitioner failed from the date of deposit of the application with the Office on 15 January, 2004, until the filing of the oath/declaration on 25 August, 2005, to inform the Office properly as to a correspondence address for the instant matter. Moreover, it also appears that Petitioner failed to file even a single Status Inquiry in the nineteen (19) months between date of deposit and the initial filing of the instant petition. Such inquiries filed at three (3) or four (4) month intervals provide a demonstration of diligence and attention in supporting a petition seeking relief under 37 C.F.R. §1.181 because regulatory requirements require the filing of such a petition within two (2) months of the act complained of, to wit: the abandonment which took place by operation of law after midnight 9 October, 2004.

On the basis of the record indication that the 9 August, 2004, Notice of Missing Parts was not mailed to Petitioner at a proper address, the petition as considered under 37 C.F.R. §1.181 is **DISMISSED**.

### BACKGROUND

The record reflects that:

- Petitioner failed to reply timely and properly to the Notice of Missing Parts mailed on 9 August, 2004, with reply due absent an extension of time on or before Monday, 11 October, 2004;
- the application went abandoned after midnight 9 October, 2004
- it appears that the Notice of Missing Parts was returned as undelivered/undeliverable, and upon review of the application it is appears that at no point in the application did the Petitioner provide the Office with a correspondence address for the application;<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The commentay at MPEP §403 provides:

403 Correspondence — With Whom Held [R-3]

37 CFR 1.33. *Correspondence respecting patent applications, reexamination proceedings, and other proceedings.*

(a) **\*\*>Correspondence address and daytime telephone number.** When filing an application, a correspondence address must be set forth in either an application data sheet (§ 1.76), or elsewhere, in a clearly identifiable manner, in any paper submitted with an application filing. If no correspondence address is specified, the Office may treat the mailing address of the first named inventor (if provided, see §§ 1.76(b)(1) and 1.63(c)(2)) as the correspondence address. The Office will direct all notices, official letters, and other communications relating to the application to the correspondence address. The Office will not engage in double correspondence with an applicant and a registered patent attorney or patent agent, or with more than one registered patent attorney or patent agent except as deemed necessary by the Director. If more than one correspondence address is specified in a single document, the Office will establish one as the correspondence address and will use the address associated with a Customer Number, if given, over a typed correspondence address. For the party to whom correspondence is to be addressed, a daytime telephone number should be supplied in a clearly identifiable manner and may be changed by any party who may change the correspondence address. The correspondence address may be changed as follows:<

(1) *Prior to filing of § 1.63 oath or declaration by any of the inventors.* If a § 1.63 oath or declaration has not been filed by any of the inventors, the correspondence address may be changed by the party who filed the application. If the application was filed by a registered attorney or agent, any other registered practitioner named in the transmittal papers may also change the correspondence address. Thus, the inventor(s), any registered practitioner named in the transmittal papers accompanying the original application, or a party that will be the assignee who filed the application, may change the correspondence address in that application under this paragraph.

(2) *Where a § 1.63 oath or declaration has been filed by any of the inventors.* If a § 1.63 oath or declaration has been filed, or is filed concurrent with the filing of an application, by any of the inventors, the correspondence address may be changed by the parties set forth in paragraph (b) of this section, except for paragraph (b)(2).

(b) *Amendments and other papers.* Amendments and other papers, except for written assertions pursuant to § 1.27(c)(2)(ii) of this part, filed in the application must be signed by:

(1) **\*\*>A registered patent attorney or patent agent of record appointed in compliance with § 1.32(b);<**

(2) **\*\*>A registered patent attorney or patent agent not of record who acts in a representative capacity under the provisions of § 1.34<**;

(3) An assignee as provided for under § 3.71(b) of this chapter; or

(4) All of the applicants (§ 1.41(b)) for patent, unless there is an assignee of the entire interest and such assignee has taken action in the application in accordance with § 3.71 of this chapter.

(c) **\*\*>All notices, official letters, and other communications for the patent owner or owners in a reexamination proceeding will be directed to the attorney or agent of record (see § 1.32(b)) in the patent file at the address listed on the register of patent attorneys and agents maintained pursuant to §§ 11.5 and 11.11 of this subchapter, or if no attorney or agent is of record, to the patent owner or owners at the address or addresses of record. Amendments and other papers filed in a reexamination proceeding on behalf of the patent owner must be signed by the patent**

owner, or if there is more than one owner by all the owners, or by an attorney or agent of record in the patent file, or by a registered attorney or agent not of record who acts in a representative capacity under the provisions of § 1.34. Double correspondence with the patent owner or owners and the patent owner's attorney or agent, or with more than one attorney or agent, will not be undertaken. If more than one attorney or agent is of record and a correspondence address has not been specified, correspondence will be held with the last attorney or agent made of record.

(d) A "correspondence address" or change thereto may be filed with the Patent and Trademark Office during the enforceable life of the patent. The "correspondence address" will be used in any correspondence relating to maintenance fees unless a separate "fee address" has been specified. See § 1.363 for "fee address" used solely for maintenance fee purposes.

37 CFR 1.33(a) provides for an applicant to supply an address to receive correspondence from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office so that the Office may direct mail to any address of applicant's selection, such as a corporate patent department, a firm of attorneys or agents, or an individual attorney, agent, or other person.

37 CFR 1.33(a) provides that in a patent application the applicant must specify a correspondence address to which the Office will send notices, letters and other communications relating to the application. The correspondence address must appear either in an application data sheet (37 CFR 1.76) or in a clearly identifiable manner elsewhere in any papers submitted with an application filing. Where more than one correspondence address is specified, the Office will determine which one to establish as the correspondence address. This is intended to cover, for example, the situation where an application is submitted with multiple addresses, such as one correspondence address being given in the application transmittal letter, and a different one in an accompanying 37 CFR 1.63 oath or declaration, or other similar situations. The determination of which of the correspondence addresses to use will be made on a case-by-case basis, considering such factors as the earliest correspondence address submitted, and the first listed correspondence address if conflicting addresses appear in the same declaration. If more than one correspondence address is specified in a single document, the Office will use the address associated with a Customer Number over a typed correspondence address.

37 CFR 1.33(a) requests the submission of a daytime telephone number of the party to whom correspondence is to be addressed. While business is to be conducted on the written record (37 CFR 1.2), a daytime telephone number would be useful in initiating contact that could later be reduced to writing. The telephone number would be changeable by any party who could change the correspondence address.

37 CFR 1.33(a)(1) provides that any party filing the application and setting forth a correspondence address could later change the correspondence address provided that a 37 CFR 1.63 oath/declaration by any of the inventors has not been submitted. If one joint inventor filed an application, the person who may change the correspondence address would include only the one inventor who filed the application, even if another inventor was identified on the application transmittal letter. If two of three inventors filed the application, the two inventors filing the application would be needed to change the correspondence address. Additionally, any registered practitioner named in the application transmittal letter, or a person who has the authority to act on behalf of the party that will be the assignee (if the application was filed by the party that will be the assignee), could change the correspondence address. A registered practitioner named in a letterhead would not be sufficient, but rather a clear identification of the individual as being a representative would be required. A company (to whom the invention has been assigned, or to whom there is an obligation to assign the invention) who files an application, is permitted to designate the correspondence address, and to change the correspondence address, until such time as a (first) 37 CFR 1.63 oath/declaration is filed. The mere filing of a 37 CFR 1.63 oath/declaration that does not include a correspondence address does not affect any correspondence address previously established on the filing of the application, or changed per 37 CFR 1.63(a)(1), even if the application was filed by a company that is only a partial assignee. The expression "party that will be the assignee," rather than assignee, is used in that until a declaration is submitted, inventors have only been identified, and any attempted assignment, or partial assignment, cannot operate for Office purposes until the declaration is supplied. Hence, if the application transmittal letter indicates that the application is being filed on behalf of XYZ company, with an assignment to be filed later, XYZ company would be allowed to change the correspondence address without resort to 37 CFR 3.73(b) until an executed oath or declaration is filed, and with resort to 37 CFR 3.73(b) after the oath or declaration is filed.

Where a correspondence address was set forth or changed pursuant to 37 CFR 1.33(a)(1) (prior to the filing of a 37 CFR 1.63 oath or declaration), that correspondence address remains in effect upon filing of a 37 CFR 1.63 declaration and can then only be changed pursuant to 37 CFR 1.33(a)(2).

37 CFR 1.33 states that when an attorney or agent has been duly appointed to prosecute an application, correspondence will be held with the attorney or agent unless some other correspondence address has been given. If an attorney or agent of record assigns a correspondence address which is different than an address where the attorney or agent normally receives mail, the attorney or agent is reminded that 37 CFR 10.57 requires the attorney or agent to keep information obtained by attorney/agent – client relationship in confidence. Double correspondence with an applicant and his or her attorney, or with two representatives, will not be undertaken. See MPEP § 403.01, § 403.02, and § 714.01(d).

If double correspondence is attempted, form paragraph 4.01 should be included in the next Office action.

#### ¶ 4.01 Dual Correspondence

Applicant has appointed an attorney or agent to conduct all business before the Patent and Trademark Office. Double correspondence with an applicant and applicant's attorney or agent will not be undertaken. Accordingly, applicant is required to conduct all future correspondence with this Office through the attorney or agent of record. See 37 CFR 1.33.

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#### I. < CUSTOMER NUMBER PRACTICE

A Customer Number (previously a "Payor Number") may be used to:

- (A) designate the correspondence address of a patent application \*\* or patent < such that the correspondence address for the patent application > or patent < would be the address associated with the Customer Number > (37 CFR 1.32(a)(4)(i)) < ;
- (B) designate the fee address (37 CFR 1.363) of a patent \*\* such that the fee address for the patent would be the address associated with the

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Customer Number >(37 CFR 1.32(a)(4)(ii))<; and

(C) submit a list of practitioners \*\* such that \*\* those practitioners associated with the Customer Number >would have power of attorney (37 CFR 1.32(a)(4)(iii))<.

Thus, a Customer Number may be used to designate the address associated with the Customer Number as the correspondence address of an application (or patent) or the fee address of a patent, and may also be used to submit a power of attorney in the application (or patent) to the registered practitioners associated with the Customer Number.

Applicant may use either the same or different customer number(s) for the correspondence address, the fee address and/or a list of practitioners. The customer number associated with the correspondence address is the Customer Number used to obtain access to the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system at <http://pair.uspto.gov>. See MPEP § 1730 for additional information regarding PAIR.

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The Office will also accept requests submitted electronically via a computer-readable diskette to \*\*change the correspondence address of a list of applications or patents or the fee address for a list of patents to the address associated with a Customer Number\*\*>.<

Such electronic requests must be submitted in the manner set forth in the Notice entitled "Extension of the Payor Number Practice (through "Customer Numbers") to Matters Involving Pending Patent Applications," published in the *Federal Register* at 61 FR 54622, 54623-24 (October 21, 1996), and in the *Official Gazette* at 1191 O. G. 187, 188-89 (October 29, 1996). >Note that such electronic requests are no longer accepted to change the power of attorney in a patent application or patent. See the notice entitled "Notice of Elimination of Batch Update Practice to Change Power of Attorney," published in the *Official Gazette* at 1272 O.G. 24 (July 1, 2003).<

\*\*>With Customer Number practice, a< patentee \*\*>is also< able to designate a "fee address" for the receipt of maintenance fee correspondence, and a different address for the receipt of all other correspondence. The designation of a "fee address" by reference to a Customer Number will not affect or be affected by the designation of a correspondence address by reference to another Customer Number, in that the Office will send maintenance fee correspondence to the address associated with the Customer Number designated as the "fee address" and will send all other correspondence to the address associated with the Customer Number designated as the correspondence address.

The association of a list of practitioners with a Customer Number will permit an applicant to appoint all of the practitioners associated with the Customer Number merely by reference to the Customer Number in the Power of Attorney (i.e., without individually listing the practitioners in the Power of Attorney). The addition and/or deletion of a practitioner from the list of practitioners associated with a Customer Number >by submitting a corresponding "Request for Customer Number Data Change" (PTO/SB/124)< will result in the addition or deletion of such practitioner from the list of persons authorized to represent any applicant >or assignee of the entire interest of the applicant< who appointed all of the practitioners associated with such Customer Number. This will avoid the necessity for the filing of additional papers in each patent application affected by a change in the practitioners of the law firm prosecuting the application. The appointment of practitioners associated with a Customer Number \*>is< optional, in that any applicant may continue to individually name those practitioners to represent the applicant in a patent application>, so long as fewer than ten patent practitioners are named. See 37 CFR 1.32(c)(3)<.

The Customer Number practice does not affect the prohibition against, and does not amount to, an appointment of a law firm (rather than specified practitioners). The Office prohibits an appointment of a specified law firm because the Office cannot ascertain from its records whether a particular practitioner submitting a paper to the Office is associated with the law firm specified in an appointment. The Office will permit an appointment of all of the practitioners associated with a specified Customer Number because the Office can ascertain from its records for the specified Customer Number whether a particular practitioner is associated with that Customer Number.

As the Office will not recognize more than one correspondence address (37 CFR 1.33(a)), any inconsistencies between the correspondence address resulting from a Customer Number being provided in an application for the correspondence address and any other correspondence address provided in that application would be resolved in favor of the address of the Customer Number. Due to the prohibition against dual correspondence in an application (37 CFR 1.33(a)), an applicant will be permitted to provide only a single number at a time as the Customer Number for the correspondence address.

Where an applicant appoints all of the practitioners associated with a Customer Number as well as a list of individually named practitioners, such action would be treated as only an appointment of all of the practitioners associated with a Customer Number due to the potential for confusion and data entry errors in entering registration numbers from plural sources. >Furthermore, Office computer systems do not allow for entry of both a power of attorney to a list of practitioners associated with a Customer Number and a list of practitioners.<

Although Customer Numbers are designed to designate both a correspondence address and to associate one or more patent attorneys or agents with an application, one Customer Number may be used for the correspondence address, and another Customer Number may be used for the power of attorney.

Applicants are strongly cautioned not to attempt to appoint more than one Customer Number for a particular purpose (e.g., correspondence address) in a single communication, as such action will not have a cumulative effect.

The Office has created a \*>Mail Stop< designation for correspondence related to a Customer Number ("\*\*>Mail Stop EBC<"), and all correspondence related to a Customer Number (e.g., requests for a Customer Number) should be addressed to this \*>mail stop< designation. The following persons are authorized to change the information associated with an established Customer Number: (1) a registered practitioner associated with the Customer Number; and (2) the person who requested the Customer Number (signed the Request for Customer Number, Form PTO/SB/125).

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- the Office mailed the Notice of Abandonment on 12 May, 2005, but, again, there was an incomplete address for the mailing—for the same reason set forth above;
- on 26 August, 2005, Petitioner filed the instant petition, with, *inter alia*, an oath/declaration—but failed to file corrected drawings as required and failed to Notice the Office as to the change of address from no address to Petitioner's office address;
- on 13 September, 2005, the Office mailed a Notice indicating that the drawings requirement had not been satisfied, as well as a Notice withdrawing the 12 May, 2005, Notice of Abandonment;
- on 15 September, 2005, the mailings from the Office again were returned for the same reason set forth above;
- on 13 March, 2006, Petitioner re-asserted the instant petition—and again failed to Notice the Office properly of the correct correspondence address for the instant matter;
- nonetheless, the Office inserted Petitioner's office address as the correspondence address and on 28 March, 2006, re-mailed the Notice to File Corrected Application papers and also mailed a withdrawal of the August 2004 Notice to File Missing Parts;
- on 31 May, 2006, Petitioner filed corrected drawings, along with a request and fee for extension of time.

Petitioner avers in his petition—apparently with all seriousness—that: “[a]t the time of filing this application on January 15, 2004, applicant's address was clearly shown on the Express Mail label as well as on the return receipt postcard (copies of both attached hereto) which was received from the U.S. Patent [and Trademark] Office after being stamped received, proving that the Patent Office did indeed have the correct address on file.”

As one long registered to practice before the Office, Petitioner well knows that a return address on an Express Mail label and on a receipt card—neither of which documents are entered into the record upon receipt—are not the proper sources from which the correspondence address is to be drawn by the Office.

**Out of an abundance of caution, Petitioners always are reminded that the filing of a petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.181 does not toll any periods that may be running any action by the Office and a petition seeking relief under the regulation must be filed within two (2) months of the act complained of (see: 37 C.F.R. §1.181(f)); and those registered to practice and all others who make representations before the Office are reminded to inquire into the**

**underlying facts of representations made to the Office and support averments with the appropriate documentation—since all owe to the Office the continuing duty to disclose.<sup>2</sup>**

### STATUTES, REGULATIONS AND ANALYSIS

Congress has authorized the Commissioner to "revive an application if the delay is shown to the satisfaction of the Commissioner to have been "unavoidable." 35 U.S.C. §133 (1994).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See supplement of 17 June, 1999. The Patent and Trademark Office is relying on petitioner's duty of candor and good faith and accepting a statement made by Petitioner. See Changes to Patent Practice and Procedure, 62 Fed. Reg. at 53160 and 53178, 1203 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office at 88 and 103 (responses to comments 64 and 109)(applicant obligated under 37 C.F.R. §10.18 to inquire into the underlying facts and circumstances when providing statements to the Patent and Trademark Office).

Specifically, the regulations at 37 C.F.R. §10.18 provide:

**§ 10.18 Signature and certificate for correspondence filed in the Patent and Trademark Office.**

(a) For all documents filed in the Office in patent, trademark, and other non-patent matters, except for correspondence that is required to be signed by the applicant or party, each piece of correspondence filed by a practitioner in the Patent and Trademark Office must bear a signature by such practitioner complying with the provisions of §1.4(d), §1.4(e), or § 2.193(c)(1) of this chapter.

(b) By presenting to the Office (whether by signing, filing, submitting, or later advocating) any paper, the party presenting such paper, whether a practitioner or non-practitioner, is certifying that—

(1) All statements made therein of the party's own knowledge are true, all statements made therein on information and belief are believed to be true, and all statements made therein are made with the knowledge that whoever, in any matter within the jurisdiction of the Patent and Trademark Office, knowingly and willfully falsifies, conceals, or covers up by any trick, scheme, or device a material fact, or makes any false, fictitious or fraudulent statements or representations, or makes or uses any false writing or document knowing the same to contain any false, fictitious or fraudulent statement or entry, shall be subject to the penalties set forth under 18 U.S.C. 1001, and that violations of this paragraph may jeopardize the validity of the application or document, or the validity or enforceability of any patent, trademark registration, or certificate resulting therefrom; and

(2) To the best of the party's knowledge, information and belief, formed after an inquiry reasonable under the circumstances, that —

(i) The paper is not being presented for any improper purpose, such as to harass someone or to cause unnecessary delay or needless increase in the cost of prosecution before the Office;

(ii) The claims and other legal contentions therein are warranted by existing law or by a nonfrivolous argument for the extension, modification, or reversal of existing law or the establishment of new law;

(iii) The allegations and other factual contentions have evidentiary support or, if specifically so identified, are likely to have evidentiary support after a reasonable opportunity for further investigation or discovery; and

(iv) The denials of factual contentions are warranted on the evidence, or if specifically so identified, are reasonably based on a lack of information or belief.

(c) Violations of paragraph (b)(1) of this section by a practitioner or non-practitioner may jeopardize the validity of the application or document, or the validity or enforceability of any patent, trademark registration, or certificate resulting therefrom. Violations of any of paragraphs (b)(2)(i) through (iv) of this section are, after notice and reasonable opportunity to respond, subject to such sanctions as deemed appropriate by the Commissioner, or the Commissioner's designee, which may include, but are not limited to, any combination of —

(1) Holding certain facts to have been established;

(2) Returning papers;

(3) Precluding a party from filing a paper, or presenting or contesting an issue;

(4) Imposing a monetary sanction;

(5) Requiring a terminal disclaimer for the period of the delay; or

(6) Terminating the proceedings in the Patent and Trademark Office.

(d) Any practitioner violating the provisions of this section may also be subject to disciplinary action. See § 10.23(c)(15).

[Added 50 FR 5175, Feb. 6, 1985, effective Mar. 8, 1985; para. (a) revised, 58 FR 54494, Oct. 22, 1993, effective Nov. 22, 1993; paras. (a) & (b) revised, paras. (c) & (d) added, 62 FR 53131, Oct. 10, 1997, effective Dec. 1, 1997; para. (a) revised, 69 FR 56481, Sept. 21, 2004, effective Oct. 21, 2004]

<sup>3</sup> 35 U.S.C. §133 provides:

**35 U.S.C. §133 Time for prosecuting application.**

Upon failure of the applicant to prosecute the application within six months after any action therein, of which notice has been given or mailed to the applicant, or within such shorter time, not less than thirty days, as fixed by the Commissioner in such action, the application shall be

The regulations at 37 C.F.R. §1.137(a) and (b) set forth the requirements for a petitioner to revive a previously unavoidably or unintentionally, respectively, abandoned application under this congressional grant of authority. The language of 35 U.S.C. §133 and 37 C.F.R. §1.137(a) is clear, unambiguous, and without qualification: the delay in tendering the reply to the outstanding Office action, as well as filing the first petition seeking revival, must have been unavoidable for the reply now to be accepted on petition.<sup>4</sup>

Delays in responding properly raise the question whether delays are unavoidable.<sup>5</sup> Where there is a question whether the delay was unavoidable, Petitioners must meet the burden of establishing that the delay was unavoidable within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §133 and 37 C.F.R. §1.137(a).<sup>6</sup> And the Petitioner must be diligent in attending to the matter.<sup>7</sup> Failure to do so does not constitute the care required under Pratt, and so cannot satisfy the test for diligence and due care.

(By contrast, unintentional delays are those that do not satisfy the very strict statutory and regulatory requirements of unavoidable delay, and also, by definition, are not intentional.<sup>8</sup>))

#### Allegations as to the Request to Withdraw the Holding of Abandonment

The courts have determined the construct for properly supporting a petition seeking withdrawal of a holding of abandonment.<sup>9</sup>

Further, the commentary at MPEP §711.03(c) provides:

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regarded as abandoned by the parties thereto, unless it be shown to the satisfaction of the Commissioner that such delay was unavoidable.

<sup>4</sup> Therefore, by example, an unavoidable delay in the payment of the Filing Fee might occur if a reply is shipped by the US Postal Service, but due to catastrophic accident, the delivery is not made.

<sup>5</sup> See: Changes to Patent Practice and Procedure; Final Rule Notice, 62 Fed. Reg. at 53158-59 (October 10, 1997), 1203 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office at 86-87 (October 21, 1997).

<sup>6</sup> See: In re Application of G, 11 USPQ2d 1378, 1380 (Comm'r Pats. 1989).

<sup>7</sup> See: Diligence in Filing Petitions to Revive and Petitions to Withdraw the Holding of Abandonment, 1124 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office 33 (March 19, 1991). It was and is Petitioner's burden to exercise diligence in seeking either to have the holding of abandonment withdrawn or the application revived. See 1124 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office supra.

<sup>8</sup> Therefore, by example, an unintentional delay in the reply might occur if the reply and transmittal form are to be prepared for shipment by the US Postal Service, but other pressing matters distract one's attention and the mail is not timely deposited for shipment.

<sup>9</sup> See: Delgar v. Schulver, 172 USPQ 513 (D.D.C. 1971).

\* \* \*

**A. Petition To Withdraw Holding of Abandonment Based on Failure To Receive Office Action**

In *Delgar v. Schulyer*, 172 USPQ 513 (D.D.C. 1971), the court decided that the Office should mail a new Notice of Allowance in view of the evidence presented in support of the contention that the applicant's representative did not receive the original Notice of Allowance. Under the reasoning of *Delgar*, an allegation that an Office action was never received may be considered in a petition to withdraw the holding of abandonment. If adequately supported, the Office may grant the petition to withdraw the holding of abandonment and remail the Office action. That is, the reasoning of *Delgar* is applicable regardless of whether an application is held abandoned for failure to timely pay the issue fee ( 35 U.S.C. 151) or for failure to prosecute ( 35 U.S.C. 133). To minimize costs and burdens to practitioners and the Office, the Office has modified the showing required to establish nonreceipt of an Office action. The showing required to establish nonreceipt of an Office communication must include a statement from the practitioner stating that the Office communication was not received by the practitioner and attesting to the fact that a search of the file jacket and docket records indicates that the Office communication was not received. A copy of the docket record where the nonreceived Office communication would have been entered had it been received and docketed must be attached to and referenced in practitioner's statement. For example, if a three month period for reply was set in the nonreceived Office action, a copy of the docket report showing all replies docketed for a date three months from the mail date of the nonreceived Office action must be submitted as documentary proof of nonreceipt of the Office action.

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The showing outlined above may not be sufficient if there are circumstances that point to a conclusion that the Office action may have been lost after receipt rather than a conclusion that the Office action was lost in the mail (e.g., if the practitioner has a history of not receiving Office actions).

Evidence of nonreceipt of an Office communication or action (e.g., Notice of Abandonment or an advisory action) other than that action to which reply was required to avoid abandonment would not warrant withdrawal of the holding of abandonment. Abandonment takes place by operation of law for failure to reply to an Office action or timely pay the issue fee, not by operation of the mailing of a Notice of Abandonment. See *Lorenz v. Finkl*, 333 F.2d 885, 889-90, 142 USPQ 26, 29-30 (CCPA 1964); *Krahn v. Commissioner*, 15 USPQ2d 1823, 1824 (E.D. Va 1990); *In re Application of Fischer*, 6 USPQ2d 1573, 1574 (Comm'r Pat.



1988). (Emphasis supplied.)

\* \* \*

And the regulation (37 C.F.R. §1.181<sup>10</sup>) requires that relief be sought within two (2) months of the act complained of.

While Petitioner makes no averment as to a search of his files for the documents in question, the facts that:

- the Office did not update the power of attorney—and so the correspondence address—in response to the 31 August, 2004, filing; and
- thus the 29 July, 2005, Restriction requirement was mailed to an incorrect address,

From the documents of record it appears that Petitioner did not on filing make it possible for the Office to mail Office actions to the correct correspondence address because Petitioner appears never to have provided such an address until at least 26 August, 2005, and on doing so at that time did not provide to the Office such Notice as is required in practice before the Office. As a result, the Office actions were not mailed to Petitioner's office address. And for that reason, as noted above on 13 September, 2005, the Office of Initial Patent Examination withdrew the 12 May, 2005, Notice of Abandonment.

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<sup>10</sup> The regulations at 37 C.F.R. §1.181 provide:  
**§ 1.181 Petition to the Director.**

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(a) Petition may be taken to the Director:

(1) From any action or requirement of any examiner in the *ex parte* prosecution of an application, or in *ex parte* or *inter partes* prosecution of a reexamination proceeding which is not subject to appeal to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences or to the court;

(2) In cases in which a statute or the rules specify that the matter is to be determined directly by or reviewed by the Director; and

(3) To invoke the supervisory authority of the Director in appropriate circumstances. For petitions involving action of the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences, see § 41.3 of this title.

(b) Any such petition must contain a statement of the facts involved and the point or points to be reviewed and the action requested. Briefs or memoranda, if any, in support thereof should accompany or be embodied in the petition; and where facts are to be proven, the proof in the form of affidavits or declarations (and exhibits, if any) must accompany the petition.

(c) When a petition is taken from an action or requirement of an examiner in the *ex parte* prosecution of an application, or in the *ex parte* or *inter partes* prosecution of a reexamination proceeding, it may be required that there have been a proper request for reconsideration (§ 1.111) and a repeated action by the examiner. The examiner may be directed by the Director to furnish a written statement, within a specified time, setting forth the reasons for his or her decision upon the matters averred in the petition, supplying a copy to the petitioner.

(d) Where a fee is required for a petition to the Director the appropriate section of this part will so indicate. If any required fee does not accompany the petition, the petition will be dismissed.

(e) Oral hearing will not be granted except when considered necessary by the Director.

(f) The mere filing of a petition will not stay any period for reply that may be running against the application, nor act as a stay of other proceedings. Any petition under this part not filed within two months of the mailing date of the action or notice from which relief is requested may be dismissed as untimely, except as otherwise provided. This two-month period is not extendable.

(g) The Director may delegate to appropriate Patent and Trademark Office officials the determination of petitions.

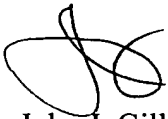
[24 FR 10332, Dec. 22, 1959; 34 FR 18857, Nov. 26, 1969; paras. (d) and (g), 47 FR 41278, Sept. 17, 1982, effective Oct. 1, 1982; para. (a), 49 FR 48416, Dec. 12, 1984, effective Feb. 11, 1985; para. (f) revised, 65 FR 54604, Sept. 8, 2000, effective Nov. 7, 2000; paras. (a) and (c) revised, 65 FR 76756, Dec. 7, 2000, effective Feb. 5, 2001; paras. (a), (a)(2)-(3), (c)-(e) & (g) revised, 68 FR 14332, Mar. 25, 2003, effective May 1, 2003; para. (a)(3) revised, 69 FR 49959, Aug. 12, 2004, effective Sept. 13, 2004]

CONCLUSION

The petition as considered under 37 C.F.R. §1.181 hereby is **dismissed as moot**.

The instant application is released to OIPE for such processing as required before being forwarded for substantive examination in due course.

Telephone inquiries concerning this decision may be directed to the undersigned at (571) 272-3214.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "John J. Gillon, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

John J. Gillon, Jr.  
Senior Attorney  
Office of Petitions